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Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 42/80)



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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

SYMPATHETIC STUDY OF LIBYAN-SYRIAN MERGER OFFERED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 19-25 Sep 80 pp 23-26

/Article: "A Calm Reading of the Syrian-Libyan Union"/

/Text/ The first act of the Libyan-Syrian union was a drama of various dimensions. The stage was prepared for the celebration of the 1 September holiday when suddenly Col Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi stood up to announce "I personally am proposing a merger union between Syria and Libya in which the Libyan people will bear the responsibilities of the Syrian people, and the Syrian people will bear the responsibilities of the Libyan people."

al-Qadhdhafi followed his declaration, which was carried on radio and television in Libya and Syria at the same time, with a threat: "If Libya is not transformed into a confrontation and unity state, and work does not take place as of today to achieve a merger union with Syria, I will join the Palestinian resistance."

The first act ended on the Libyan political stage and started on the Syrian political stage. The television lights turned on and President al-Asad hastened over the airwaves to send a cable to Col al-Qadhdhafi from Damascus welcoming his invitation, on grounds that "every call to union and serious action for its sake move the feelings of the masses of the Syrian Arab people and cast an immediate echo and genuine response in their spirits. We extend our hands to shake your hand, which is extended to us, for the sake of the goal of unity, so that we may work immediately together to achieve this great goal."

The acts followed one another with striking speed between Damascus and Tripoli, and in less than a week after al-Qadhdhafi's appeal President al-Asad reached the Libyan capital at the head of a party and government delegation, to meet with the delegation of the Libyan Jamahiriyah and its revolutionary committees under the chairmanship of Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi.

Over a period of 2 days of discussions which took place in the midst of demonstrations, conferences and revolutionary committees in the jamahiriyah, agreement was reached on the "unity resolution" by the two presidents.

Political observers noted that the designation of "the unity resolution" was made officially to the national and regional command of the ruling party in Syria and the popular committees of the Libyan Arab Socialist People's Jamahiriyah, which

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declared that they had held exceptional meetings on 2 September, the day following the personal offer of union, as President al-Qadhdhafi said in his speech. It happened that the Syrian president replied to the latter, accepting by immediate personal cable the same day, directly after al-Qadhdhafi had finished giving his speech.

In the cable, the Syrian president expressed that by saying, "Your call, the enthusiasm with which the Libyan Arab masses greeted it, and the warm cries of the masses pressing for union touched my feelings, and they moved the feelings of the masses of the Syrian Arab people."

Although nothing has been published concerning the decisions of the national and regional command of the ruling party in Syria or the popular conferences of the Arab Jamahiriyyah, and consequently concerning the bases, conditions or terms to which each party is committed in carrying out the union and determining its form, nature and content, it is clear that "the announced unity resolution" reflects almost completely al-Qadhdhafi's well-known thoughts and sympathies on unity, which are focused on two basic points, first, that it be "immediate" and second that it be a "merger."

In this context, the "unity resolution" specified five guidelines:

First, establishment of a single state out of the two countries.

Second, enjoyment by this state of complete sovereignty over the two countries and possession of a single international personality.

Third, the leadership of the two countries will be united.

Fourth, the unity state will have a general national conference.

Fifth, the unity state will have a single executive power.

The "unity resolution" ended by binding the leadership of both countries to promulgate decrees and executive measures for this serious resolution in a period not to exceed 1 month, which will end next 9 October.

Some sources with strong bonds to Mr "Abd-al-Salam Jallud, the second man in the Libyan regime, have repeated that there is a common conviction among officials in the two countries concerning the establishment of a merger union state with its various major institutions before the period of 1 month elapses--specifically on 6 October, the date of the seventh anniversary of the October (Ramadan) war. Thus the merger union of Syria and Libya will, according to an expression attributed to 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud, be a second October war, not against Israel alone but also against al-Sadat's regime, the United States, and all the reactionary and feudal forces in the Arab nation.

With the issuance of The "unity resolution" on 10 September, the lights went out over the political stage and the public spectacle which Col Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi began with his speech which burned with passion and enthusiasm.

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Behind the Wings

However, political observers and journalists do not content themselves with the scenes on the stage on which their eyes fall. Rather, they rush into the wings to search out, penetrate and ask about the facts and secrets behind the visible spectacles, great and small alike.

These observers quote a Libyan official who holds a distinguished position in the ruling circles, has solid contacts with Col Mu'ammr al-Qadhafi and said that the notion of the union began to ferment in his head 2 weeks before the date of the celebration of the anniversary of 1 September and that it was not restricted to Syria, but rather, in his conception, included Algeria, Democratic Yemen, and the Palestine Liberation Organization and had the objective of turning the members of the Perseverance and Steadfastness Front into a "single merger state" of a kind new not just in the Arab world but in the entire world.

These observers continue:

Col al-Qadhafi took the advice of 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud and 'Ali al-Turayki not to embark on a serious step like this before first making feelers in an indirect manner.

That was because the failure of some or all states and members of the Perseverance and Steadfastness Front to respond would have the effect of afflicting Libya (and President al-Qadhafi) with real gross damage at a time when it was facing increasing danger from domestic and foreign opposition, not to speak of Libya's Arab isolation, its disputes of varying degrees within the Perseverance Front itself, and the growing crisis in its relations with Malta and Africa, to which one should add the military mobilization al-Sadat's regime has conducted on the Libyan-Egyptian borders.

The Process of Extending Feelers

The matter ended with al-Qadhafi submitting to the advice and using the occasion of the invitation of the Perseverance and Steadfastness Front countries to participate in the 1 September celebrations at the highest level to extend feelers on the subject of the union.

The process of extending feelers produced obvious negative positions on the part of all countries and members of the Perseverance front except Syria, which welcomed a discussion of the notion of the union and sent a high-level delegation to take part in the celebrations headed by al-Kasim, the prime minister, while the others contented themselves with sending delegations at an ordinary protocol level.

A source with solid links with the Syrian delegation at the celebrations denied that President al-Asad or his prime minister had previous knowledge of al-Qadhafi's plan to establish an immediate merger union between the two countries. All the instructions al-Kasim had were to enter into discussions on common bases to establish more solid military-economic-political cooperation between the two countries to pave the way for some form of a union. However, it happened on the day prior to the celebration that Mu'ammr al-Qadhafi asked al-Kasim to have Syrian radio combine its frequency with that of Libyan radio in order to broadcast

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his speech in both Libya and Syria at the same time, stressing that he would declare "unlimited moral and material support for Syria, the base of the Arab perseverance," and that the speech would include "news gladdening" to President al-Asad. al-Kasim cabled Damascus al-Qadhdhafi's request and received an answer of agreement. al-Kasim was surprised to learn that the gladdening news was the demand for an immediate merger union.

The Syrian source says "Thus we were taken unaware. What could we do? We could not resist or hesitate in the face of any appeal for union whatever. It is an appeal which we, for the first time in the history of our relations with Libya, broadcast over our radio, as if we had been in previous agreement."

After that everything proceeded with speed and enthusiasm. al-Qadhdhafi's ardor affected everyone and left its mark on the course of events. Even one Libyan official warned, as the "unity resolution" was on the verge of being declared, that the document contained only "the Christian date" and ignored "the Islamic hegira date" which al-Qadhdhafi in particular always insists precede the Christian date in documents, when he does not content himself with it alone. The Libyan official confided his observation to al-Qadhdhafi, who angrily waved his hand away and said "The date is not important, what is important is that the declaration be issued now, immediately, with any date there is."

A Fourth Attempt

In fact, the declaration of the immediate merger union between Syria and Libya is the fourth try al-Qadhdhafi has made to give body to his special ideas on this subject. Three attempts preceded it which were not foreordained for success but rather subsequently met with collapse. The first, toward the end of President 'Abd-al-Nasir's era, was with Egypt, the Sudan and Syria, in the form of a federation of republics. The second, after President al-Sadat assumed the position of president, was with Egypt and Syria. The third was with Tunisia.

It goes without saying that Arab unity was and remains the basic objective of the Arab masses over the length and breadth of the Arab nation. This goal has acquired decisive, overwhelming force on the Arab stage, to the point where it has come to assume priority in the programs of all operating political parties and organizations and has ceased to be confined only to the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party or other national parties and movements.

However, the experience of the Egyptian-Syrian merger, through its establishment in 1958 and its collapse in 1961, through the positive and negative aspects which unity in practice has revealed, contributed to the development of the theory and practice of unity from a theoretical framework stripped of reality and problems, with a national emotionalism disdainful of political, social and economic discrepancies, to the framework of a combative national scientific act which challenges the actual state of fragmentation, atomization and backwardness, not ignoring it, but attaching it to others through the process of unity itself and through preparation of the objective and subjective circumstances for the establishment of the union on the basis of the foundation of free mass will and joint national interests through effective democratic formulas which are able to challenge, prevail and develop. Without this vision of unity and exercise of unity, any hasty unstudied act

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union from above which does not spring from a free mass choice will have the effect of causing the regression of the national unity movement as a whole through further negative features and sowing disappointment among the Arab people over unity--their main weapon in the struggle against imperialism, Zionism and backwardness. It is a struggle whose scope expanded and whose gravity escalated following the Camp David agreements and al-Sadat's regime's initiative of concluding a separate peace between Egypt and the enemy.

Interest and a Warning

Therein lies the intense interest, also accompanied by an intense warning, in the declaration of "immediate merger union" between Syria and Libya by government decree of the leaders of the two countries, with the stipulation that the ingredients of the union, and the establishment of its agencies within a single state, be completed within a maximum of 1 month.

It is true that the goal which was declared as a motive for this union--to stand fast against the imperialist Zionist al-Sadatist schemes against the Arab people in general and the Palestinian people in particular--remains the contemporary national goal which will require the mobilization of various Arab capabilities in order to be achieved, whether in the form of broad effective Arab solidarity, as occurred at the Baghdad summit conference, or in overall or partial Arab unions.

However, it is also true that the heat of the national struggle is growing intense and complex, so that what is required is not Arab solidarity in any form whatever or unity in any form whatever; rather, the situation requires an effective Arab solidarity, growing in strength, setting forth from the minimum which the Baghdad conference referred to to higher and more aggressive limits. This is what happened with the unanimous Arab position on the Iraqi-Saudi declaration of confronting "Israel"'s attempt to devour Jerusalem and declare it as its capital, leading to a rapid positive response on the part of the international community, the Security Council and the countries which have diplomatic representation in Jerusalem to boycott "Israel" and refuse to consider Jerusalem as its capital, within the limits of a month specified by the Iraqi-Saudi declaration, with the Arab and international force and economic, petroleum and political force this statement acquired.

So That We May Avoid the Negative Features of the Past

The same is the case with respect to union between two Arab countries in this sphere. Unity is needed, needed intensely and urgently, but on condition that it be effective and influential in the battle of confrontation, be purged of the negative features of the past, and not stop at tactical limits for purposes of ostentation or for the attainment of particular intrinsic goals for one regime or another under the guise of national unity.

Moreover, unity does not lie in a vacuum; rather, it is an act within an actual sociopolitical situation on numerous international and Arab levels. What is important is that the results of the act ultimately be positive. There is no way to achieve that through enthusiastic wishes, emotions and revolutionary slogans; rather, it will come through the ability to build a "tool of action" which will possess the resources for prevailing and interacting in a creative manner with the circumstances surrounding it.

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The Syrian-Libyan union, in spite of the declaration of the unity resolution and the commitment to build a unity state within a month, still and in reality remains just a plan on paper.

If this plan is properly encouraged it will turn into reality and will not leap from paper into life not by applause and enthusiasm but by putting the plan, proceeding from the premise of unity, under strong light, with its various local, national and international economic, social, political and military dimensions.

The first thing which attracts one's attention in the Syrian-Libyan unity plan is the urgent nature with which it is characterized, to the point where one can wonder how much responsibility and awareness of the dangers and circumstances facing it it contains.

The union is to establish a merger structure between two countries more than 1,200 kilometers apart, one of which lies in the continent of Asia and the other in the continent of Africa, in a maximum of 1 month. The question is how can this state achieve a merger between its two segments, which are separated by this enormous distance which traverses a number of countries, among them Egypt, where al Sadat's regime is located, supported by Camp David and American military bases?

The issue here concerns not just a union between two countries on two continents--a matter without precedent in ancient or modern history--but between two countries which are radically different in their political systems and even in their intellectual premises and the format of state in society in each.

Whoever Plays Politics Is a Traitor

Syria is governed by a party which the Syrian constitution explicitly stipulates is the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, which is presumed to have its own socialist and nationalist ideological premises. The format of the state is closest to a presidential system with a parliament possessing specific powers. Libya, meanwhile, is based on the principle that "whoever plays politics is a traitor" and is fundamentally and absolutely against the party system. It has its particular intellectual premises, known as "the third international ideology," which President al-Qadhafi has included in his famous green book. The institutions of the state are founded on a basis of mass government, a unique format without precedent in history or without a similar manifestation in the present. It is founded on what are called popular conferences and revolutionary committees run by secretaries loyal to the third ideology and "the secretary and commander of the great 1 /September/ revolution."

The question facing both President al-Asad and President al-Qadhafi is what format of state and society the merger union state will rely on--the format of the Ba'th Party and the presidential state or the format of the popular conferences and mass government? In the intellectual premises dominating and governing the political and social course, will it be the ideology of the Ba'th Party or the third ideology?

While the declaration of the union specified a date of no more than 1 month to construct the unified merger state, will this period be adequate to settle this

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profound difference between "the former Libya" and "the former Syria" in the new state?

It is well known that Libya and Syria are two charter members of the Perseverance and Steadfastness Front, the front which has distinguished itself within the framework of the broad Arab solidarity which was consolidated at the Baghdad summit conference, in accordance with the premise of confronting the new Zionist-imperialist onslaught via Camp David with a common minimum which could be increased. The members of this front were to have committed themselves to a higher degree than the Baghdad summit's minimum of confrontation struggle. Although it has been observed that this maximum has not been translated into practical influential acts and positions--as happened with the members of the conference of the minimum--does this mean that disputes between the members of the Perseverance Front have inhibited agreement over practical positions, and the implementation of these positions, in the process of confronting the Camp David treaty? The merger union between Syria and Libya is a union between two members of the Perseverance Front in the face of the other members of the front, who differ with them.

What are the points of agreement and points of dispute between Libya and Syria, and with the other regimes? What ultimately is the destiny of the Perseverance Front itself, following this Syrian-Libyan polarization around a single merger state?

According to the political terminology used on the scene, Syria is a direct military confrontation state with Israel, whereas Libya is a political, economic and military support state.

However, the merger union between the two states into one state means Libya's transformation from a support state to a state in confrontation with Israel. This, in its substantive, not formal, sense, means, on the one hand, that Libyan military power, with its manpower and armaments resources, will be shifted to the Syrian front line with Israel; on the other, it means that Libya is preparing itself for the probability that Israel will attempt an aggression against it by air, especially since Menachem Begin, the enemy's prime minister and minister of defense, and Rafael Eytan, the Israeli chief of staff, have seized the opportunity of the unity declaration and its objectives to claim that that constitutes "a probable military danger to Israel" and will, in accordance with well-known Israeli custom, be the cover for aggression. This probability with regard to Israel requires, on Libya's part, also, the presence inside Libya of Syrian forces experienced in fighting the enemy.

Personal Struggles

The question therefore in the face of these dangers and burdens involves the possibility of merging the Libyan and Syrian military forces, with their human and armament resources, into one command in a long front line extending from Syria in Asia to Libya, within the limits to which this merger can reach, its effectiveness and speed of movement, and the increasing domestic opposition facing the regimes in both countries--not to mention the burdens Syria is bearing through its military presence in Lebanon and the burdens Libya is bearing with its African neighbors, most of which are turning into enemies. The same is true of Libya's former ally

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Mintoff, president of the Republic of Malta. All observers expect this opposition will become more intense in coming weeks because of the dispute between the two countries over the rights of each to drill for oil in the continental shelf, and each party's threat to use military force against the other.

Before and after all this, there remains the fact that the struggle between the Egyptian regime, which has made a conciliation with Israel, and the Syrian and Libyan regimes, has gone beyond the objective national cause over Camp David to intense personal struggles between the three chiefs, al-Sadat, al-Asad and al-Qadhafi, in which the issue, as far as al-Sadat goes, is to get rid of al-Asad and al-Qadhafi, and conversely the issue, as far as both al-Asad and al-Qadhafi go, is to get rid of al-Sadat.

Therefore the clash between Egypt and Libya, and reciprocal terrorist action between Egypt and Syria on each other's territory, create a situation between the heads of the three regimes, with its own subjective explosive problems, which the Syrian-Libyan unity state must take into careful consideration.

On the international level, with respect to the connection with the current American-Soviet struggles in the Arab region, it is to be observed that Syria and Libya have lately been progressing, in their international policy, along a line of inevitable international polarization, in the sense that, going by what the leaders of the two countries have declared, if the United States of America is the godfather of Camp David and the separate peace agreement between Egypt and Israel, and is basically intending to invade the area by polarizing Egypt along with a number of Arab countries and establishing military bases there, the answer to this is the total alignment of all Arab countries and powers hostile to and opposed to Camp David with the Soviet Union, on grounds that that is the international force which supports Arab rights.

Syria and Libya are alone in declaring this position, because the other Arab countries and forces, while not differing in defining the nature and role of the position of the United States and the Soviet Union in the Arab area in general and the Arab-Israeli struggle in particular, are, in the context of the Baghdad summit, opposed to the policy of polarization in the region, because that would shift the struggles of the cold and hot war between the two giants to the Arab countries in a way which would turn the Arab-Israeli struggle into a marginal part of the process of international struggle, instead of being the focus of the collective action of all Arab forces possessing an independent position.

By virtue of the human, economic and military powers it possesses--if properly mobilized and used--this collective independent Arab position can also be the key to Arab international relations, either by putting pressure on America and its interests in the region or by formulating relationships of mutual cooperation on a basis of equality with the Soviet Union, whose constructive role regarding Arab rights is not denied, in the words of Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, along with the increasing enticement of forces in Western Europe from the American-Israeli sphere to the Arab-Islamic sphere and the third world. This is something that cannot be achieved through the effect of isolating America, Israel and al-Sadat's regime if some of the Arab nation is polarized with Washington and the rest with Moscow.

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As had been expected, al-Sadat's regime and his information media ventured to launch an attack on the Syrian-Libyan union, from this standpoint specifically, claiming that any Arab movement outside of or opposed to Camp David bore the marks of the Soviets and did not arise from free capable Arab will, since, as the Cairo newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH wrote, the basic point from which the Syrian-Libyan union plan proceeds is what the Perseverance and Steadfastness Front states agreed on at their last conference in Tripoli, where the Soviet Union was promoted from the rank of "friend" to that of "brother."

The Soviets, who, in a significant and limited way, welcomed the merger union, hastened to implant the impression that they, like others, were surprised at its declaration of it and that the union had objective conditions which had to be present alongside the feelings of enthusiasm which accompanied its declaration.

This initiative, in the estimation of observers, was a clear message to the Arabs and Americans together "not to make erroneous calculations and mix impressions of the facts on the subject of the Syrian-Libyan union."

There remains, finally, the fact that the Syrian-Libyan union will from now on in actual practice be facing the issue of spelling out its position on "united Arab action" to oppose Camp David and of shifting it from the minimum levels to the levels of positive defense and preparation for offensive sites--action which proceeds from the Baghdad summit to the Tunis summit and the strategic economic-political summit which will be held in Jordan in November.

This is because this united Arab action, which has assumed the format of broad Arab solidarity, is based on the premise that the current stage is the stage of the national liberation of territory, the economy and Arab resources from colonialism, Zionism and Camp David and the establishment of bases for building a comprehensive developmental Arab economic integration. Consequently, without ignoring or neglecting the need to redistribute national revenue in a just manner and provide basic freedom for Arab people, the prevailing basic character is the national character, while the documents on the Syrian-Libyan merger union and the speeches by Presidents al-Asad and al-Qadhafi concentrate on the fact that the social issue is the basic prevailing character of the current stage, and that the issue of socialist construction is the means to bring down Camp David and defeat the new Zionist-colonialist onslaught.

In the declaration announced by LIBYAN JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY under the title "The Tripoli Union Declaration" on 10 September, observers noted with interest the fifth paragraph, which stipulated that "the construction of socialism, in addition to being a necessity which arises from the needs of Arab socialism, is a basic means to cause the powers of the masses to burst forth and move them forward in their struggle for unity and against Zionism, imperialism, and all elements of backwardness and reaction. Therefore, the struggle to build socialism in the union state is basic."

The union state, according to the text of the declaration, is first a base for the movement of the Arab revolution (Paragraph Six), then a base and instrument for confronting the Zionist presence in the Arab nation and liberating Palestine (Paragraph Seven).

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The question is, what position will the Syrian-Libyan union state take, by giving the socialist cause predominance over the cause of national liberation in this stage of resistance to the Camp David onslaught? What will be its position on united Arab action and its formula for solidarity, which includes conservative regimes and countries, or at least states which do not accept socialism while in practice standing against Israel and Zionism?

The questions concerning the Syrian-Libyan union are numerous and serious.

It would not be objective for us to anticipate events, or at least the period of a month stipulated for establishment of the state, in answering these questions.

Whatever the viewpoints, and whatever the extent of the enthusiasm here or the caution there, the objective criterion for judging the Syrian-Libyan union will remain a calculation of the gains and losses regarding the role of the new union state, in supporting and developing unity of Arab action for its various powers in the vicious, multidimensional battle of confrontation against the Camp David treaty.

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ISLAMIC AFFAIRS

DEVELOPMENT OF MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD IN SYRIA DESCRIBED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 26 Sep-2 Oct 80 pp 21-26

[Article: "Question Seeking Answer: Muslim Brotherhood"]

[Excerpts] It is needless to say that the current position of the Muslim Brotherhood is connected in one way or another with the Brotherhood's initial start in Egypt and with the political, social and intellectual atmosphere in which Shaykh Hasan al-Banna, the Brotherhood founder, grew up.

Brotherhood in Syria

Fundamentally, Hasan al-Banna's call was not confined to Egypt. He wanted this call to cover all parts of the Islamic world.

It was natural for al-Banna to send his advocates to the Arab countries in an attempt to disseminate the Muslim Brotherhood's principles. If we review al-Banna's book--"Memoirs of Call and of Advocate," published by al-Maktab al-Islami (Islamic Office), p 200--we can read a chapter entitled "Our Call in the Fraternal Countries."

The first two envoys sent by the Brotherhood to Palestine, Syria and Lebanon were 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Sa'ati and Muhammad As'ad al-Hakim. The brotherhood's magazine published this report on the visit:

"The readers have learned the news of the dispatch of 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Sa'ati and Muhammad As'ad al-Hakim to visit the fraternal country and to spread the call in all parts of Syria and Palestine. We have received reports from them that they arrived safely in Jerusalem on the morning of Sunday, the 5th of Jumada al-Awwal, in the company of Tunisian leader al-Ta'alibi who left Cairo with them on the evening of Saturday. His Eminence Muhammad Amin al-Husayni, the grand imam and the chairman of the Supreme Islamic Council [in Palestine], has accorded the two brothers warmest welcome and sympathy."

Al-Banna then devotes a chapter to discuss the Muslim Brotherhood in Damascus and a chapter to discuss the Brotherhood's call in Beirut (p 202, same reference), noting that al-Sa'ati and al-Hakim held contacts with the Islamic organizations in these two capitals and that the Charitable al-Maqasid Society had asked the general headquarters to send it one of the brothers to teach legislation and literature.

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Thus, the call started to spread in Syria, Palestine, Sudan, Lebanon, the Arab Maghreb and other places as of the 1930's.

Because the space available to us here does not permit us to discuss the Brotherhood's development in all these countries, we will focus here on the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria because of this Brotherhood's recent rise to the surface of the events there and because of its daily clashes with the regime.

If we cast a glance on the history of the Muslim Brotherhood rise in Syria, we would find that in the wake of Hasan al-Banna's emergence in Egypt in the 1930's, the Syrian students in al-Azhar--who numbered in the hundreds at the time--were influenced by the call and tried to set up similar organizations. Upon their return to Syria, they established in it Islamic societies which spread throughout the various governorates. The Muhammad Youth Society rose in Damascus, Dar al-Arqam Society rose in Aleppo and the Islamic Society Rose in Damascus.

When those societies gained a degree of stability, they contacted the muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and established such firm relations with it that it was decided to set up a united Muslim Brotherhood organization in Syria including all those societies. The Muslim Brotherhood's centers of influence were in Hamah, Aleppo and Damascus.

When the Brotherhood was formed in Syria, its leadership was assumed by Dr Mustafa al-Siba'i, the well-known leader from Homs, who retained this leadership in the 1940's and 1950's and until the movement was dissolved in the wake of the Syrian-Egyptian unity in 1958.

Political inactivity then dominated the Muslim Brotherhood movement. However, the movement continued its campaign to revive the idea of the Islamic system.

Resumed Activity and Subsequent Ban

During the secession period, i.e. in 1961, the Muslim Brotherhood organization was permitted to resume its activities.

In that atmosphere, the Islamic groups in Syria held in 1962, under the umbrella of the Muslim Brotherhood, the biggest Islamic conference in the history of Damascus. 'Isam al-'Attar was elected grand master [muraqib 'amm] of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria in the presence of Dr Mustafa al-Siba'i who died in 1964.

'Isam al-'Attar played a prominent role in Syria's political life and was elected deputy for Damascus in 1962. But when a coup was staged in 1963, the Muslim Brotherhood organization was banned.

In 1964, 'Isam al-'Attar went to perform his pilgrimage. Upon his return, he was prohibited from entering Syria despite his repeated attempts. He thus went to the city of (Akhen) in West Germany where he has headed the Islamic Center (Bilal's Mosque) and from where he has been directing the Muslim Brotherhood organization.

The Syrian arena has not been confined to the aforementioned Muslim Brotherhood organization but has also seen the emergence of radical Islamic movements,

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including the Islamic Liberation Party [hizb al-tahrir al-Islami] which was founded by Taqi-al-Din al-Nabhani, a Palestinian, in 1951 and 1952.

This party still relies on cells that are spread in a number of Arab countries.

Let us return to the Muslim Brotherhood Armed Organization which is dominating the Syrian arena at present. This is an organization which broke away from the Muslim Brotherhood (of al-'Attar) and called itself the Strugglers' Fighting Vanguard [al-tali'ah al-muqatilah li al-mujahidin]. It started with political assassinations and with the issuance of a publication called AL-NADHIR [The Herald] which carries the organization's political and military statements.

This organization was founded by the late Marwan Hadid, a leader from Hamah who led the Hamah revolt of 1964.

However, the strugglers appeared in large numbers in 1975 when Marwan Hadid decided to transfer the battle to Damascus and made his famous announcement that "the regime will not disappear except with the formation of armed groups to assassinate the regime's leaders."

In fact, Hadid did actually start leading the operations in Damascus and young men and women not exceeding 15 years of age started to join the organization.

Marwan did not last long. The special units and the defense garrisons arrested him after a heated battle which was led by Rif'at al-Asad personally and in which a helicopter was used to land troops on the top floor of the building occupied by Marwan and his comrades. Marwan died in prison as the result of cruel torture. But Marwan Hadid's death strengthened the resolution of the organization strugglers and motivated them to carry out further assassinations which caused the regime to lose its composure. However, the organization lost its leaders one after the other and Salim Muhammad al-Hamid, the son of Muhammad al-Hamid who is considered one of Syria's prominent imams, was killed.

The Strugglers' Fighting Vanguard's leadership was then assumed by Engineer 'Adnan 'Uqlah [who was either killed or arrested] at his headquarters in Aleppo. Moreover, the other Muslim Brotherhood leaders have been dispersed, including Sa'id Hawa, the author of "God's Soldiers" which is considered the combat constitution and the revolutionary course of the Muslim Brotherhood groups in Syria.

Hawa was released in 1977 and lives presently in one of the Gulf states.

A part of the military support received by the Muslim Brotherhood can be traced to the Muslim Brotherhood group in Lebanon.

There is no doubt that the Muslim Brothers with their various inclinations have constituted and continue to constitute a source of major concerns for the Syrian regime. Perhaps the biggest concern is the degree by which the Muslim Brotherhood supporters have infiltrated the policy and the army. The previous experiences of the Brothers in Egypt and in Syria did prove that the movement had succeeded in creating extensions for itself in the military sectors. This is the bone that the regime is trying to avoid swallowing and this is what explains the changes that

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[Hafiz] al-Asad has made in the army and military police commands since last July when four members of the military police, led by the first lieutenant, hurled two grenades, which did not explode, on his car.

This, briefly, is the Brothers' trip from Egypt to Syria.

Naturally, the movement raises a big and many-sided question that deals with the real program that this movement is trying to carry out, with the movement's relations with the other influential forces existing on the Arab arena, with the future of these relations and with the "system" that the movement believes must be established, not to mention the future of the movement itself.

The Brothers are trying nowadays to put back together the "image" of al-Banna and of his movement which has been shaken by the passage of time. To what degree will they succeed?

The big question continues to be raised for discussion.

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ALGERIA

AGREEMENTS AUGUR TURN IN ALGERIAN-FRENCH RELATIONS

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 29 Sep 80 p 34

[Article by Youcef Adrari: "Algiers-Paris--The Thaw"]

[Text] The agreements signed in Algiers inaugurate a new phase in the relations between France and Algeria. But it is still necessary for Paris to do its part!

Relations between Paris and Algiers, frozen for several months, have just undergone a significant detente, marked by the signing, in the Algerian capital, of an agreement on a number of points, thereby lightening the heavy dispute between the two countries.

The negotiations, which lasted several months, were laborious, intense. And had it not been for the real desire of the two countries to achieve at least an agreement capable of thawing the situation, they would have led to nothing, as had been feared at the beginning of this summer.

In effect, Jean Francois-Poncet, minister of foreign affairs, was to pay an official visit to Algiers on 12 July in return for the visit made by his Algerian counterpart Mohamed Benyahia at the beginning of this year. His visit was postponed "for schedule reasons." It was doubtlessly desired, both in Algiers and in Paris, to let the decisions ripen further and to clear the ground in such a way that--as was the case--this visit would be crowned with success.

Some Major Trump Cards

In both capitals, the climate of serenity and cordiality that prevailed in the last meetings between the French and Algerian delegations was stressed. The exasperation that marked the beginning of the negotiations was thus far in the past. The observers, surprised by the speed of the conclusion of the Algiers agreements, are unanimous in their judgment that it was due to the tenaciousness of the chief of Algerian diplomacy and Algeria's desire not to permit--under penalty of a total rupture with France, the consequences of which would have been serious--any more of the procrastinations, evasions and blockages of various kinds that have characterized the French approach throughout recent years. Likewise, Algeria put the spotlight on the dubious investments that certain French circles had carried out through actions that seemed isolated but were integral parts of a plan aimed at creating problems in the country and among the emigres, with a view, if not to destabilizing it, at least to making it more "flexible."

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The Algerian negotiators have not hidden the fact that as regards certain specific and especially serious dossiers relating to immigration, social security and other questions that derive from an historical past for which France is responsible, they have wanted and still want settlement of the disputes to be included in an overall approach to the relations between the two countries. This means that Algeria is not at all in the position of a petitioner but takes its stand as an equal partner with major trump cards in its hands in the political and economic areas, and that it is directly affected by French policy, both within the Hexagon--especially as regards the security of the Algerians who work in it--and outside it, considering the role that Paris plays both in the Mediterranean and in Africa.

It is obvious that the genuine desire "to broaden cooperation between the two countries," as Jean Francois-Poncet declared in Algiers, is not in itself sufficient to clear the rough, rutted and mine-strewn ground, whose name is: French military intervention in Shaba, in the Central African Republic, in Chad, and especially in the Sahara.

This is why, say the Algerian official circles, the Algiers agreements signed on 18 September should be consolidated without delay by a series of initiatives that are not limited to the technical domain but derive from a real political will.

Algeria, through the statements of President Chadli Bendjedid and of Mohamed Benyahia, has on many occasions proclaimed its desire to achieve an overall agreement opening up a really new phase in relations with France. It seems that Paris is bending an ear to these appeals. Is this enough for one to believe that it is finally going to respond to them, as it has been urged to do by the most diverse French political and economic circles, traditionally attached to cooperation with the Arab countries?

A Conception to Reconsider

These same circles, who have often criticized the government's policy toward several Third World countries, consider that by reason of the current election considerations, Paris could be led to review the conception of its relations with these countries, especially Arab and African countries. There is no doubt but that the way in which Paris abides by application of the agreements signed in Algiers will constitute a decisive test, for many political observers fear that new diplomatic pressures will be exerted by Morocco and its allies to sabotage the important turnaround that was started on 18 September.

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ALGERIA

FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR 1980-1984 REVIEWED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 3 Oct 80 p 2407

[Article: "The Algerian 5-Year Plan 1980-1984--Fluidifying the Economy and Putting the Biggest Emphasis on Consumption"]

[Text] Algeria's 5-Year Plan 1980-1984 should make it possible in the time frame of 1990, through realization of the actions programed, to meet the fundamental social aspirations of the population.

In the first phase, growth, within a better framework of application of socialist management of the enterprises, will reduce the tensions and the rigidity of the economy by reabsorption of the present imbalances.

In the second phase, the progress in productivity will combine with acceleration of the rates and raising of the levels of investment in all activities affected by the fulfillment of the long-term objectives.

The 1980-1984 Plan has taken, in function of the overall forecasts for development of production, an annual growth rate higher than 8 percent, engendering an increase in gross domestic product on the order of 10 percent per year.

During the period of execution of the Plan, Algeria will continue to call on foreign sources, in sizable volumes and for very varied ranges of products and services. Consequently, the import needs during the plan period have been estimated at about 270 million dinars, at 1979 prices, for an annual increase of 6 percent.

400 Billion Dinars in Investments

The volume of investments during the 1980-1984 Plan represents 400 billion Algerian dinars (DA), about 200 billion of which covers the cost of programs decided on before the startup of the Plan but not yet carried out. The biggest allocations have been to the agricultural and water sectors.

The 1980-1984 general program of investments, by sector, is per the summary below, in billions of Algerian dinars:

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	<u>Programs</u>	<u>Expenditures Authorized</u>
Industry	211.7	154.5
Hydrocarbons)	(77.7)	(63)
Agriculture	59.4	47.1
Water	(30)	(23)
Transport	15.8	13
Economic infrastructures	56.1	37.9
Housing	92.5	60
Education - Training	65.7	42.2
Social Infrastructures and Collective Equipment	34.3	25.9
Enterprises to Carry Out Projects	<u>25</u>	<u>20</u>
Total	560.5	400.6

Among the actions initiated before the startup of the 1980-1984 Plan but not yet completed and to be assigned to the general program above are projects of very unmaturation time, and the conditions of implementation and the updating of costs justify some possibilities of reorientation and reorganization.

The breakdown of the programs initiated to end-1979 is as follows, in billions of DA:

Industry	79.5
including hydrocarbons	(28.4)
Agriculture-water	17.8
Education - Training	30.3
Housing	34.5
Economic Infrastructures	19.9
Social Infrastructures	6.7
Collective Infrastructures	2.4
Other	<u>5.8</u>
Total	196.9

In the area of reorganization of the enterprises, the deficiencies of production tools will be remedied by improvement and renewal of equipment.

The weak productivity performance is not limited to the industrial sector; it has also been noted in construction-public works, transport, and the marketing of food products.

Generally speaking, reduction of the size of the industrial units, in which the problems of health and safety are quite important, will be sought. Thus, medium-size industries will be multiplied.

In agriculture, decisive action will be undertaken to improve the production structures, the self-management of the cooperatives and the real involvement of the workers in improvement of productivity and of the results. Efforts will be devoted to stimulating young people to stay in agricultural production. On a more general level, action will bear on soil development; protection and extension of the forest stock, in liaison with the big agricultural projects in the south and in the north;

and on the basins of the big dams and development of pasture land. Development of irrigation involves the restoration of 25,000 ha [hectares] of old areas, the creation of new dams, and well-drilling to irrigate 50,000 ha. In addition, the development and improvement of stock-raising are among the urgent priorities.

Economic infrastructure is receiving 50.9 billion DA in expenditure authorizations, including: roads, 8.3 billion; rail, 5 billion; ports, 2.2 billion; airports, 2 billion; telecommunications, 6 billion; equipping industrial zones, 1.4 billion; storage and distribution, 13 billion; and transport, 13 billion. These actions should remedy the deficits and blockages presently experienced in road and rail transport and in port equipment. As regards transport, continuance of growth implies renewal of equipment and strengthening of the means for meeting the unsatisfied needs. The storage and marketing facilities require reorganization in the direction of decentralization.

A new concept now prevails in the carrying-out of social and collective equipment projects. The payment authorizations total 92.7 billion DA, including urban housing, 45 billion; rural housing, 15 billion; collective equipment, 16.4 billion; health, 7 billion; and miscellaneous social infrastructures, 9.3 billion. The programs total 140 billion DA. Execution of them will be accompanied by decentralization, flexibilization of the institutional and financial procedures, and encouragement of individual construction.

The number of school-leavers in 1984-1985 is estimated at 357,000 adults, whereas the present possibilities for access to training provide only 112,000 places. Moreover, on the social level, the phenomenon and the consequences of the inactivity of young people from 14 to 18 require sustained action. In this area, the development of technical education and the implementation of an apprenticeship policy will help to solve the problem. The expenditure authorizations total 42.2 billion DA, including: education, 25.8 billion; training, 7.8 billion; and higher education and scientific research, 8.6 billion.

The second phase of the decade's development depends on the adoption of large-scale projects in the steel industry and in the production of equipment goods.

The financial means assigned to increasing the capacities of the enterprises have increased strongly in the last several years, mainly in the big national enterprises but also gradually and timidly in the local enterprises. These investment capacities should be increased considerably with the general framework of reorganization of the big enterprises, acquisition of mastery over production tooling, the maintenance of equipment, and the tasks of training and supervision of the technical personnel.

At the same time, the public authorities will devote special attention to protection and improvement of the standards of living and of consumption by making a close connection, at all stages of economic life, between the objectives of demand and the production and importation capabilities, at the levels both of flow and of prices. Thus, whereas the rate of investment in the economy varies only slightly, it is estimated that the growth of consumption should be 8.6 percent per year, as against only a little more than 7 percent for investments.

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NATURAL GAS PRICING GOALS OPPOSED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 3 Oct 80 p 2406

[Article: "In Its Attempt To Link the Price of Gas to That of Oil, Algeria Will Have To Take the Market's Possibilities Into Account"]

[Text] Linking the price of natural gas to that of oil would be "extremely dangerous" for buyers as well as producers, in the judgment, expressed on 26 September, of the president of Gaz de France (GDF), Pierre Alby, while the negotiations with Algeria could be resuming. The French official, who was speaking in Paris on the occasion of the 97th Congress of the Technical Association of the Gas Industry, considered that the price of gas was not "a market guideline price and that consequently, its price has to adjust to the market price, and not vice-versa."

Moreover, the cost of transport and distribution of gas to the user is higher than for oil, and in the long term, higher than for nuclear energy. GDF cannot charge a higher price for it without losing its customers. Thus, according to Alby, in order for gas to "remain competitive with rival products," its purchase price has to be compatible with the market competition.

In his interview, the president of Gaz de France did not once mention Algeria by name. But he was obviously referring to the talks--only marking time so far--between Gaz de France and SONATRACH (National Company for the Transport and Marketing of Hydrocarbons), which is asking for parity between gas and oil.

In the same perspective, the general director of Energy, Francois de Wissocq, said to this congress of gas technicians meeting in Paris that "the purchase prices of gas could not be imposed by the producers and could result only from bilateral producer-consumer negotiation." Alluding to the negotiations with Algeria, he considered that to ask for wellhead alinement of the prices of gas with those of oil would be to base oneself "on mythology and not on economics."

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, reporting these statements, mentions the fact that no agreement has so far been reached on a new price for the gas delivered by Algeria. For the time being, GDF, according to informed sources, is paying \$3.20 per million BTU (British Thermal Units)--that is, the index-linked price included in the contract that continues in force--whereas at the beginning of the year, SONATRACH had asked payment of \$6 (see MTM [MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS] of 15 August).

Nevertheless, a certain easing of Algeria's position was noted in Paris after the recent statement by the agency ALGERIE PRESSE SERVICE (APS) indicating that Algeria

was "open to consideration of a gradual progression in price evolution so as to give concrete expression to the principle of parity (natural gas with oil) within a reasonable time." However, Algeria remains "firm," APS specified, on "the objective of parity of liquefied natural gas with crude oil" (MTM of 26 September, p 2349).

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ALGERIA

BRIEFS

GAS PRICE INCREASE THWARTED--Gas is not as manageable an economic weapon as oil, and Algeria has finally failed in its efforts to double the price of its liquefied natural gas. Moreover, it has discreetly resumed negotiations with France and the United States, countries it had put pressure on by interrupting its deliveries. The main reason for Algeria's failure--all the more serious in that it compromises the profitability of the Algerian gas-liquefaction installations--is that The Netherlands and the Soviet Union have accepted, for their gas exports, prices far lower than the target set by Algeria. It is especially Moscow's attitude that has delivered the coup de grace to the Algerian attempt. Algeria has thus learned to its expense that the USSR sometimes puts its economic interests ahead of its political friendships. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 8 Oct 80 p 35] 11267

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IRAQ

HIGHER EDUCATION MINISTER INTERVIEWED ON WAR POLICY

Tokyo NIHON KEIZAI SHIMBUN in Japanese 19 Oct 80 p 5

[Interview with Mohammad Khalaf, higher education and scientific research minister, by Nihon Keizai reporter in Tokyo on 18 Oct 80]

[Text] Special Envoy Mohammad KHALAF of Iraq (Higher Education and Scientific Research Minister), who is now visiting Japan, granted an interview to a Nihon Keizai reporter at a hotel in Tokyo on the afternoon of the 18th, clarifying the Iraqi side's position toward the Iran-Iraq war. At the press conference, the Special Envoy stressed that Iraq welcomes various kinds of initiatives for peace. He also stated as follows: (1) Iraq will not make requests to Japan and other nations in connection with the war; and (2) Iraq does not hope that the war this time will spread to the whole area along the Gulf. Also, concerning attacks against the Iran-Japan Petro-Chemical (IJPC) Plant, the Special Envoy merely said that "under the war situation, it is difficult to discern what projects are being carried out by what nations." The Special Envoy is slated to visit China, after his visit to Japan, and confer with Chinese leaders, including ZHAO Ziyang. The salient points of his statements at the press conference are as follows:

1. Iraq is hoping for strong and also extensive economic co-operative relations with Japan. However, Iraq has not done such a thing as to request Japan and other nations to procure materials for Iraq, in connection with the war this time. I am visiting Japan for the purpose of explaining Iraq's position. We are stressing, from our position as a member of the non-aligned nations, that the international problem will be settled peacefully.
2. (In reply to a question asking whether attacks against the IJPC Petro-Chemical Plant will be continued.) Under the war situation, it is difficult to discern what projects are being carried out by either Japan or France. Since many projects in Iraq are being attacked, there is no room to make any other choice but to retaliate. It was the Iranian side that bombed economic facilities and street areas first.
3. We are not seeking military aid from nations friendly toward us. We are rather hoping for their efforts for the realization of peace. Iraq has been accepting every initiative for peace shown by UN Secretary General WALDHEIM and others. Also, Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations are not taking part in the fighting this time. No other military units than the Iraqi Forces are in the war. Iraq has never sought other Arab nations' joining the war. The report that Jordan has sent military units to Iraq is a mistake.

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4. (In reply to a question asking about [Iraq's] response, in case the UN Security Council adopts a resolution calling for the Iraqi Forces' withdrawal.) The UN Security Council has not taken up the problem of adopting such a resolution. The Security Council should take into consideration Iraq's various legitimate rights and the facts about the cause of the war.

5. The war this time will probably not spread to all areas along the Gulf. It is strictly a war between the two nations. We are not hoping for the spread thereof. The Strait of Hormuz is an international waterway. For Iraq, too, that waterway carries a vitally important meaning. It is said that the various nations of the West are working to establish an international warships unit. Iraq rejects the super-powers' intervention in this area.

6. Iran is refusing to stop fighting. Iraq will continue to fight until Iran accepts peace. As long as the war with Iran continues, it will be difficult for Iraq to resume the exports of oil.

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ISRAEL

ISRAELI MILITARY SUPPLIES TO IRAN

LD021150 London THE OBSERVER in English 2 Nov 80 p 9

[Article by Patrick Seale: "Israel Sends Spares for U.S. Arms to Iran"]

[Text] Israel has been providing military supplies to Iran in its war against Iraq, according to well-informed European shipping sources.

The sources say clandestine cargoes of Israeli-owned military spares are being shipped under flags of convenience to the southern Iranian ports of Chah Bahar, Bandar Abbas and Bushehr.

It is understood that at least some of the cargoes, including spares for American built F-4 Phantoms, helicopters and missile systems, have been rerouted for the past month to Iran from European depots before ever reaching Israel.

The sources point out that, in its interests, Israel has become skilled in manipulating world shipping.

Israel's surprising aid for Ayatollah Khomeyni, verbally one of its most violent antagonists, is explained by two motives. First, it is in Israel's interest to wear down the Iraqi war machine, the only one in the region which presents a potential threat in view of President Saddam Hussayn's pan-Arab ambitions.

Second, by helping Iran in its hour of need, Israel hopes to regain a regional non-Arab oil source. Analysts see the Israeli move as laying the groundwork for restoring the close relations in many fields, including oil and security, which Israel enjoyed with the shah.

Beyond ideological differences, Israel and Iran share a common interest, now re-asserting itself, to hold Arab power in check. As one senior European diplomat put it: "There is no way Israel could have kept out of this war."

It is no secret that since the Gulf war began in September, Iranian emissaries have been scouring the world for spare parts for their American equipment. Some have been acquired in the Far East by Libya, one of Iran's few Arab allies, and flown in. But these air cargoes are not thought to be significant compared to the aid Israel has been supplying.

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As Israel and the shah's Iran were armed by the United States with identical weapons, Israel's arsenal is the nearest, the most plentiful, and the most obvious for Iran to draw on.

But Israel cannot help in the supply of refined oil products, especially aviation fuel. Shortage of oil products is Iran's real weakness, precipitating what looks increasingly like a national catastrophe.

Although Iraq's progress has been slower than expected in the face of continuing resistance, the brute fact is that Khuzestan, Iran's oil province and its prime source of wealth, has been knocked out. Without it, Iran would be reduced to the rank of a fifth-class power--a sort of Afghanistan.

The central issue of the Gulf war now is less the status of the Shatt al-'Arab--Iraq's ostensible motivation--than the ultimate fate of Khuzestan, which Iraq shows every sign of wanting to detach from Iran.

Iraq's problems of resupply are not nearly as acute as Iran's. In spite of the damage done to the Basra petrochemical complex and to the oil installations and pipelines elsewhere, oil continues to be produced and refined in adequate quantities.

Nor is there any apparent shortage of military equipment. Intelligence sources report that 145 Soviet tanks have been delivered since the war began. This aid far outstrips the contribution Israel is making to Iran.

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ISRAEL

'THE TIMES' REPORTS MORE RESTRICTION ORDERS PLACED ON WEST BANK ARABS

LD051337 London THE TIMES in English 5 Nov 80 p 7

[Dispatch by Christopher Walker: "Israelis Invoke British Mandate To Tame Arab Leadership"]

[Text] Jerusalem, 4 Nov--In the past few months, more than 30 prominent Palestinian politicians, journalists and trade union organizers in the occupied West Bank have been served with restriction orders by the Israeli military government, placing them under effective "town arrest" for an unlimited period.

The three latest orders, issued under emergency regulations dating from the British mandate, came into effect earlier this week. A spokesman for the military government told THE TIMES that the orders brought to 33 the number of West Bank Arabs prevented from leaving their home towns.

The orders are part of a deliberate--and increasingly successful--Israeli policy designed to sabotage the activities of the National Guidance Committee, the influential body of Palestinian leaders which, after its formation two years ago, had begun to provide cohesive Arab leadership in the region.

The three Arabs placed under town arrest this week were named today as Mr 'Adil Ghanim, a leading trade union organizer and member of the Nablus Municipal Council; Dr 'Azmi Shu'abi, a former member of the al-Birah Council and Mr Khalid al-'Awad, a former mayor of the town of Qagatiyah.

They are suspected of organizing political opposition to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. None has been told how long the orders will remain in force.

The three join a growing list of Palestinians unable to attend meetings of the National Guidance Committee--now regarded by observers to exist in name only. Apart from those under town arrest, committee members include the two Arab mayors appealing against deportation orders and two recovering abroad from car bomb attacks.

Those served with restriction orders include the editors of the two most militant Arabic newspapers in the West Bank, ASH-SHA'B and AL-FAJR and the communist paper, AT-TALI'AH. They also include most of the Arab mayors remaining of the 25 elected in the last West Bank poll in 1976.

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The government spokesman claimed tonight that the policy was proving effective in reducing unrest. "I think it is working very well," he said. "Anyone can see the area is much quieter than for a long time."

Ironically, that boast is supported by the few prominent Palestinian figures still able to travel freely in the region and talk openly to foreign journalists. The leaders reluctantly acknowledge that the combination of the policy and the lack of effective Arab leadership have reduced anti-Israeli activity to a low level.

There was clear evidence of that last Sunday, the anniversary of the signing in 1917 of the Balfour Declaration. Traditionally, this date has been marked by serious Palestinian unrest, but this year trouble was restricted to sporadic stoning incidents and an unsuccessful attempt by students to set up road blocs in the West Bank.

Another factor in weakening local Palestinians' resistance has been the Gulf war. The fighting has dispirited many West Bank Palestinians and divided others into pro-Iraqi and pro-Iranian camps.

The calm in the West Bank is expected to continue while the policy remains in force--but at the price of increasing political bitterness. The one foreseeable factor which could transform the situation is the scheduled return later this year of Mr Bassam al-Shak'ah, the crippled mayor of Nablus, by far the most militant and charismatic Palestinian leader from the region.

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ISRAEL

FORMER AMBASSADOR TO UN ON 'WESTERN IGNORANCE OF MIDDLE EAST'

LD041301 London THE TIMES in English 4 Nov 80 Europa Supplement p 1

[Article by General Chaim Herzog: "Gulf War Exposes West's Ignorance"]

[Text] The Western world has once again been caught unawares by events in the Middle East. The frequency with which this development is occurring must give rise to considerable concern in the Free World. The revolutions in Afghanistan, the Soviet invasion of that country, the revolution in Iran, and now the Iranian-Iraqi war in the Shatt al-'Arab have all caught the Western world by surprise.

The reason for this is the obsession, caused by an approach of expediency or ignorance, of the Western governments and media with the Israel-Arab conflict, almost to the exclusion of all the other major issues which threaten the peace of the world in the Middle East.

It is perhaps indicative of the complete absence of priorities in evaluating the situation in the Middle East, which characterizes the approach of the Western world to the area, that at the height of the struggle along the Shatt al-'Arab, Mr Gaston Thorn, the president of the European Council, was visiting not Baghdad or Tehran, which were locked in a conflict which could threaten the life supplies of the West, but Israel, to discuss the Palestinian issue with Israeli leaders and leaders of Arab opinion in the West Bank. At the same time, Chancellor Kreisky of Austria was discussing the same subject in Jordan.

What has not been realized is that even if the Israel-Arab conflict is resolved, by whatever means, the great dangers to the peace of the world in the Middle East will persist. The inherent instability in the Arab world and in the Middle East which is reflected in the Iraq-Iran war, is compounded by the supply of possible military nuclear capabilities by France to Iraq and to Pakistan. This fact poses the greatest danger to the Western world today.

Thus the major significance of the struggle in the Shatt al-'Arab for Israel lies in the fact that it once again highlights the dangers which threaten Western society from the area of the Middle East, which are totally unrelated to the Israel-Arab conflict. There are 10 conflicts today in the Middle East and Arab world which threaten the peace of the world, and which bear no relation to the struggle between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

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But the struggle is of immediate military interest to Israel too. Two so-called confrontation states bordering Israel are threatening to become involved in the conflict in the Gulf. Syria is engaging in military demonstrations on the Iraqi border to aid the Iranians, although it is doubtful that given the present internal unrest in Syria, President al-Asad would commit forces. Jordan, which has the longest border that an Arab country has with Israel, is becoming more and more involved in the supplies to Iraq, and has openly come out in support of Iraq in the Gulf war.

In Israel's war of independence in 1948, and again in the 1973 Yom Kippur war, Iraqi forces were actively engaged against Israel's armed forces. In 1948 several Iraqi brigades were responsible for the northern sector of the West Bank in the fighting against Israel.

In 1973, an Iraqi armoured division fought the Israeli forces in the Golan Heights which were advancing towards the approaches to Damascus, and lost more than 100 tanks in battle. At various periods, Iraqi forces were stationed in Jordan to bolster that country in its struggle with Israel. The Iraqi Army, with 12 divisions, of which four are armoured, with more than 2,000 tanks and approximately 500 first-line aircraft, has come to be a major element in the Arab forces comprising Israel's eastern front, which together total a rough equivalent of the forces of NATO in Europe today.

A form of stalemate has emerged on the Iraqi-Iranian front. Thus a war of attrition, such as developed along the Suez Canal from 1968 to 1970 between Israel and Egypt, could well ensue. Should Iraq retain territory gained in the war, the lost areas will provide a focus for a revanchist nationalistic Iranian effort to recover the territory. This will be the central theme of every Iranian regime, whatever its nature or colour.

Thus the Iraqis will have created a military problem along the border with Iran which will compound the internal difficulties in Iraq, and will direct Iraqi military intervention eastwards, as opposed to the Israeli front. From a military point of view, therefore, the failure of Iraq to achieve a decisive victory cannot but be viewed with relief in Israel and, indeed, in the Free World in general.

The creation of a major military confrontation for Iraq along its Iranian border must provide a measure of relief, from a military point of view, for Israel. At the same time, Iran will, like Israel, not be able to view with equanimity the development of nuclear facilities in Iraq.

Militarily the performance of the two armies in the war has been disappointing in the extreme. The Iraqi Army committed six of its 12 divisions to the attack, but its leadership in the field has been slow, hesitant and indecisive. Its advances have been made in many cases against weak and frequently sparse Iranian forces. There has been a total lack of imagination in the direction of the war and, were it not for the parlous state of Iranian equipment because of poor maintenance and internal bloodletting, the Iraqi Army would have faced a much tougher task.

The air operations, again, have been ill-conceived, poorly executed and have really been no more than hit-and-run raids by single aircraft or small numbers of aircraft against strategic targets such as oil refineries. By cannibalizing its fleet of aircraft, Iran has undertaken a greater number of sorties than might have been credited.

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The conduct of the war should once again provide a lesson for the Western powers who place so much trust in indigenous forces in the Middle East in the event of a conflagration. The performance provided by the two armies, from a professional point of view, is a fair reflection of what can be expected from most of the armies in the area, and should put into correct perspective and lend a certain sense of proportion to the military benefit to be gained from the supply of advanced weapons to armies such as that of Saudi Arabia.

The case with which Iraq cavalierly cancelled a treaty solemnly entered into in 1975 with Iran when it seemed propitious so to do, has not gone unnoticed in Israel.

It is clear that no faith can be put in an international agreement in the Middle East unless it is adequately backed by proper military and political balances, which in themselves provide sanctions in the event of one side attempting to break the agreement. Numerous treaties have been signed by Arab countries one with the other in the Middle East, but few are honoured to this day.

Much in the background from the outset of the struggle between Iraq and Iran has been the Soviet Union, bent on taking advantage of developments. It has been unhappy with Iraq, which has shown an over-independent attitude, and which sprang the war on the world without the prior knowledge or connivance of the Russians (as opposed to what occurred in 1973 when the Egyptians attacked in the Yom Kippur war).

Close observance of the current behaviour of the Russians in the Gulf area seems to indicate that they will now make every effort to take advantage of the situation to develop relations with Iran as a natural corollary to their action in Afghanistan. Such a move could bring them in one move to the shores of the Gulf.

All this has been developing and happening while the Western world has been occupying itself with issues which, however important, are nevertheless secondary in the context of the problems facing the Free World in the Middle East. The forces ranged against each other on the Shatt al-'Arab are not motivated by the Palestinians.

Most of the combatants know little about them and care less. It is this obsession with side issues and a tendency to ignore the major issues affecting the Middle East which constitute the greatest danger to the Western world in the Middle East. One senses a lack of understanding of priorities and a lack of leadership capable of dictating such priorities.

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ISRAEL

ROBOT AIRCRAFT SPY ON PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON

LD031531 London THE TIMES in English 3 Nov 80 pp 1, 4

[Dispatch by Robert Fisk: "Israel Files Robot Spies Over Lebanon"]

[Text] Rashaya Foukhar, Lebanon, 2 Nov--The Israelis are using miniature robot aircraft equipped with cameras to spy on Palestinian guerrilla positions in southern Lebanon.

The aircraft--about 10 ft long, painted white and driven by a single propeller in the nose--are flying over villages controlled by United Nations troops and penetrating more than a mile to the north of their lines to photograph Palestine Liberation Organization bases on the hillsides and in the olive groves of the lower Bekaa Valley.

Neither the Israelis nor the United Nations have so far chosen to reveal the existence of the "drone" aircraft but intelligence records at the headquarters of the United Nations interim force in Lebanon at Ennaqura show that more than 70 flights by robot aircraft have been made over United Nations positions in the past five weeks alone.

At least 50 of these reports have been logged by Norwegian and Ghanaian troops stationed around the villages of Ebl el-Saqi and Rashaya Foukhar at the southern end of the Bekaa.

The aircraft are controlled by mobile radio vehicles positioned along roads inside the south Lebanese enclave controlled by Major Saad Haddad whose men are supplied and armed by Israel.

Most of the aircraft are launched within four miles of the major's provincial capital of Marjayoun which is within sight of the Norwegian 6th Battalion's headquarters at Ebl el-Saqi. They fly four miles north over the ancient town of Hasbaya.

The United Nations are powerless to prevent these robot flights over Lebanese territory and the Israelis at first denied all knowledge of the machines.

Only when the United Nations suggested that if this was the case, there could be no objection to United Nations soldiers using the aircraft for target practice did the Israelis apparently offer to make further enquiries.

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Norwegian soldiers were originally uncertain of the identity of the tiny aircraft flying over their tents and barrack houses but a few days ago, a platoon of Norwegian troops tramping over the lower slopes of Mount Hermon towards the village of Chebaa actually saw one of the crones climbing into the sky from a hillside near an Israeli gun position.

Beneath the clouds that covered the upper part of the mountain, the Norwegians saw a small camouflaged military truck with a radar scanner on the roof. The antennae were directed towards the little white aircraft as the lorry moved along an improvised road.

The drone passed over them and headed towards Hasbaya at a height of about 900 feet later turning back towards Israel.

The pilotless aircraft, which make a low buzzing sound in flight, have wings almost as long as their fuselage and a tail complete with flaps and rudder.

United Nations officers have not yet been able to determine where the machines are manufactured, although the United States, as well as a number of European countries make such reconnaissance aircraft.

The southern part of the Bekaa Valley has long been known as Fatahland because Palestinian guerrillas have used this wild, mountainous scrubland as a springboard for attacks into Israel for the past 11 years.

The United Nations lines separate Palestinian forces near Hasbaya from the Israeli backed Christian militias at Marjayoun but both Major Haddad and the Israelis have often accused Dutch, Norwegian and Irish soldiers of the United Nations of failing to prevent Palestinian guerrillas from infiltrating towards the Israeli border.

Cameras in the robot aircraft could photograph any Palestinian movement and identify the position of guns and rocket-launchers which regularly bombard Israeli territory.

In fact, the United Nations is probably not unhappy at the presence of this fascinating new addition to the war in southern Lebanon. Since it is also the United Nations' job to prevent Palestinian infiltration, any extra check on guerrilla movement is likely to curb the number of Palestinians trying to move south.

No one, of course, needs spies in the sky to monitor the movements of Major Haddad's infiltrations northwards. Just six weeks ago, for example, the Christian militias maneuvered an Israeli-supplied Super Sherman tank, together with an armoured personnel carrier, to a road junction within the United Nations-held area west of Rashaya Foukhar.

There have been protests about this latest infringement--but the tank is still there.

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